



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE LABORER AND THE LADY

BY JOHN CORBIN

WE have been accustomed to think of the manual worker as a victim—victim of the Industrial Revolution that in a little more than a century has transformed all living. But neither sociologist nor historian has recognized a fact, quite demonstrable to those who will see it, that his cause is bound up with the cause of a strangely assorted companion in misery, a companion whom he neither loves nor in any way considers, the woman of the middle class. It is true that their misfortunes are widely different, so different that one rubs one's eyes at realizing that they have a common cause. To the laborer the factory has brought grinding toil; to the lady it has brought deprivation of all productive function—everything that, since the far dawn of family life, has made her self-supporting, self-respecting. There is a further difference. Though the laborer has been a victim, he has already found a means of escape. Through his unions he has magnificently resisted oppression; in the doctrines of equality and democracy he has the promise of transcendent power, industrial as well as political. If he is victim of the present he is also protagonist of a future deeply portentous. In brief, what the lady has lost in productivity and in amplitude of life—all that and more—the laborer is winning, has won. It is a strange duel, this, between antagonists who have no thought of each other, are scarcely aware of each other's existence. What is to be the end of it?

First, let us pause to consider how far we have come since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. The substance of our thought, social as well as political, has been largely made over. The process has been gradual, for the most part insensible; but it has been none the less profound—none the less ominous to the woman well born and well bred, to the middle class home.

When the Constitution was framed the nation faced formidable

problems. Individual States were jealous of one another. For fear it might be taken for only a small Commonwealth, lose its equality under the union, Rhode Island insisted on having two Senators, quite like New York. Senators were an asset in those days. To-day Senators have dwindled and States are no longer sticklers for the theory of equality. Rhode Islanders are citizens of "the greatest nation on earth" but Rhode Island is only as large as it is. That question was faced and solved at the outset; not so the question of State Sovereignty. To placate the South, nothing was said about slavery in the instrument of our liberty, about secession in the instrument of our union. So we had the Civil War. To-day the negro is as free as seems humanly possible and the nation is one and indivisible. Those issues, too, are as past—dead as the jealousy of Rhode Island for New York. It is a fact of prime importance: Everywhere the old local spirit has been submerged in a sense of common nationality.

One other question the Constitution evaded—whether the National Government should be weak or strong. It has been settled, or all but settled, by a peaceful process of growth. When Washington and Hamilton assumed office they sought to make the Nation organic and functional. An opposing party, largely created by Jefferson and ultimately led by him to victory, distrusted authority in all forms. Though they despaired of the glorious "unrestraint" of the life of the Indians, they exalted individual freedom, denounced central authority. Yet our deeper instincts have always been national. The structure of the Federalists stood. Of all Hamilton's "monocratic" measures, which Jefferson so bitterly, vindictively, assailed as leader of an irresponsible opposition, he did not venture to alter one, not one, when the tide of the new democracy swept him into power. More than that, he was the first to give rein to another deep national instinct which equalitarians among us still denounce as Imperialism. He bought Louisiana from the monocrat Napoleon and, instead of administering it as a free dependency, he governed it in Napoleon's own monocratic manner, as a subject colony—though he knew very well that in doing all this he made the Constitution, as he expressed it, "waste paper." Down to the present our "Empire"—the term is Washington's—has

widened always and has been in the main administered in the high spirit of liberty. Yet always the central government has consolidated its power. The Civil War gave to Federalism, the functions of union, a constitutional basis. The spreading growth of industry, and its rapid integration on a national scale, have given it a magnitude and diversity of responsibility which, though Hamilton foresaw it quite clearly in a general way, was beyond the power of any mortal mind to grasp in its complexity, its immensity. We do not yet know how far the federal power may extend in the world of business, even in the more personal affairs of the citizen, but so much is certain: Whatever the doctrinary democrat may say, the Federalist programme of Washington and Hamilton is an accomplished fact, firm and irrevocable. In proportion as the local spirit has faded, the national spirit has intensified.

There was only one other great issue. It was latent in 1787 and for the most part unsuspected, but it was destined to sow new seeds of internal strife and disruption, to transform the status of the lady—the opposition between rich and poor. The well-to-do had always led—manorial farmers, merchant traders, professional men. It was they who organized the Revolution, who framed our Constitution and gave it the bent of their genius while they administered it. Democracy was a word they avoided, an idea they distrusted. Those fit to lead were to that extent people apart, with a special scale of life, special resources. No one really objected, for the differences between man and man were not articulate, being by no means oppressive. Land was plenty and farming the principal, almost the only, occupation; ability, even mediocrity, was free to rise—did rise. The institutions of liberty functioned. Yet the doctrine of a universal and “natural” equality had been enshrined in the Declaration of Independence—and envy is always with us. Eventually Jefferson, whose political instinct was as deep and practical as his “philosophy” was shallow and doctrinary, recognized a strategic opportunity.

Rejecting the whole-visioned, unfactional government of the best which Washington dreamed, he accomplished his much vaunted “Revolution of 1800”—in effect creating the class

struggle half a century before Karl Marx. Conciliatory as was the intention of his inaugural address, the consciousness of having launched a new era breathes through it; he never ceased to vaunt his revolution as of equal moment with the Revolution of 1776. The credulous, narrow-minded gossip as to those perilous "monocrats" and "Anglomen", Hamilton and Washington, which he spread in his *Anas*, was probably not altogether inspired by an underhand, personal malice; it had also the purpose of recording for posterity the nature of the menace from which he had delivered his countrymen, the full scope of the opportunity which his Democratic Revolution had opened to them.

Doubtless there was a measure of truth in both his hopes and fears. Hamilton saw too vividly the envy, cupidity, thoughtlessness, of our national character—trusted too fully in the splendid rectitude, vigor and public beneficence of the institutions he was helping Washington to create. Doubtless also there was a genuine if superficial spirit of fraternity in Jefferson's democracy, an optimism as to American character which in some measure has been justified. Our national tradition is ampler, richer, warmer for the "Revolution of 1800". But all that will avail us little if the postulates upon which Jefferson founded it were false and if, through thick as through thin, we continue to act on them.

Of all the issues present or latent in 1787, that of equality and democracy is the only one that survives as a menace. More than that, it has grown hugely, enormously, until Jefferson himself, if he could see our plight, would be appalled. For, in spite of his "philosophy" and his affectation of a homespun equality, the architect of Monticello can only have loved beauty and distinction, believed that it is the prerogative of the able and the wise to lead. His beautiful mansion is an original creation quite apart from the Georgian movement and essentially superior to it. True, it is the work of an amateur. Jefferson played by ear not only in fiddling and in statesmanship but in his supreme accomplishment of architecture. But where Inigo Jones and Wren derived from Palladio, he had the purity of taste to go straight to the classic Roman architecture. His style of living

was grandly exclusive, his house planned with amazing skill, as the traveler may see to-day, to obliterate all sight of his many servants, all that busy human contact with them which was inevitable and manifestly welcomed in other manorial households, notably Mount Vernon. Washington housed his artisans and laborers substantially within a stone's throw of his industrial manor, and mingled with them freely; but Jefferson housed his slaves in distant dug-outs, wretchedly unwholesome, made them approach his manor through a tunneled passage and go about their ministrations in hidden halls and stairways.

This is the democrat who received the British Ambassador in slovenly homespun shorts and carpet slippers, who denounced Washington's simple dignity as monarchical. Henry Adams remarks in his *History* that, whereas John Marshall was among the most approachable and (as Marshall would *not* have said) democratic of our Revolutionary statesmen, Jefferson was, in his personal instincts, the most aristocratic. Land being the basis of independent seclusion, the great democrat scorned city life and looked to the future of the nation as purely agricultural. Hamilton recognized the vast sources of prosperity made possible by mechanized industry and, as a pupil of Adam Smith, foresaw that its development was inevitable in all countries; so he urged an intelligent preparation for it. Jefferson, as he tells us in his still delightful *Notes on Virginia* (1782), hoped to keep our nation free from its toils. "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God. . . . The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the human body." To the angry protests of our incipient industrial population he added this soothing word, unconsciously and ironically prophetic. As yet, he wrote, American workmen were "independent and moral" and would "continue so as long as there are vacant lands for them to resort to". He little suspected that within a single century free land many times the area of the thirteen States would be taken up, that long before then democracy would wear a different front toward the kindest sage, the most patronizing philosopher. He could not foresee that his Democratic Revolution would be met and be reënforced by a revolution far more subversive.

Thanks to the Industrial Revolution, undreamed in 1782, the nation is to-day richer than ever before, better fed, better housed, better educated. Yet there is a sore on the body politic. The city poor are multitudinous, wretchedly bound in servitude. It is not merely that, in the absence of available land, they are tied to their machines, held fast in dreary manufacturing districts to a mechanical monotony of toil. That fate is varied, though not improved, by periods of racking overtime, alternating with periods of unemployment that are even more demoralizing. The envy of the lowly, which Jefferson philosophically indulged and played upon for his political ends, is sharpened by every period of deprivation, spurred on by every pang of hunger—tantalized always by newspaper exploitation of the follies of the conscienceless rich. Against those who are abler and happier this envy has one present remedy, the doctrine enunciated in the Declaration of Independence and made a political force in the Revolution of 1800—the doctrine of equality, democracy. When the class struggle which Jefferson created in cunningly mingled self-interest and kindness joined hands with the Industrial Revolution, both took on a grimmer reality, the articulate demand of which is—still another revolution, the most sinister of all. For if men are really equal they are equal not merely in politics but in all things. That is the essence of Proudhon's declaration, forty years after Jefferson's revolution, that property is theft; of Marx's demand that the "expropriators" be "expropriated"; of the Bolsheviks' and Guild Socialists' programme of industrial democracy. If there is truth in the Jeffersonian maxim, it is the right of the Demos to rule not only the political state but that which alone gives it vitality in the world of to-day, its great productive industries.

It is only on the surface that this present conflict lies between workman and employer, between Socialist and Capitalist. In its deeper and more vital aspects it is, though all unconsciously, a conflict between laborer and lady. By exacting wage increases at the expense of the lady's natural helpmeet—the manager, the technician, the professional man—organized labor has already made huge inroads upon the middle-class scale of living, its vigor and fecundity. That we know. A greater danger lies in the

future. What of the new Socialism with its programme of industrial democracy? Would it not write finis to all the well-bred woman holds dearest, the labor of love and the life of the cultivated, the aspiring home? If the Industrial Revolution and the Revolution of 1800 join hands for good and all, is not civilization doomed to perish once more as it has perished in the past through the extinction of the educated, the educable, and the rise to power of what in ancient times was called the freedman? Or is it possible that there are the seeds of progress in what to-day seems merely subversive—that the Democratic Revolution can be modified and the Industrial Revolution somehow converted into a spiral of advancement, raising laborer and lady both to higher levels of living—and the whole nation with them?

It is not an easy problem. It differs not only in magnitude but in kind from all others our country has faced. To the question of federal expansion and organic federal functioning there was from the start only one answer. To the question of slavery and secession there were at most a brace of answers—one American State or many. In the present nationwide struggle of labor against capital, complicated as it is by the nationwide struggle of industrial democracy against middle-class distinction, if either faction were to triumph decisively, imposing its will upon the others, it would mean the end of liberty—the one great spiritual heritage of the Nation.

It is a curious reflection upon the competence of modern sociology that only labor and its champions have dealt at all realistically, progressively, with this problem of the Industrial Revolution. "Conservative" writers look backward, ignoring the fact that, like conservation, conservatism is important only as it meets the needs of an advancing and ever enlarging future. In even the most righteous demands of organized labor they see a crudely inverted tyranny. In the inexorable forces that are integrating our industries on a national scale, they see only a "conspiracy", a "restraint of trade", and impose against it a restatement of the ancient common law—anti-trust legislation that envelopes them in a mesh of obvious inconsistencies and flagrant ineptitudes. The tangle of our anti-trust laws as interpreted and re-interpreted by the courts has resulted from our

fumbling effort to solve twentieth century problems by applying the legal concepts that were already ancient in the eighteenth century. Everywhere there is the same confusion. The need of discriminating standards in citizenship, that shall keep our institution sound and strong, providing adequate service in peace as in war, is ignored as incompatible with equality, impossible in a democracy. Compulsory education we have; but against more fundamental projects of raising the national standards of birth and breeding, "conservatives" invoke all the eighteenth century conceptions of personal freedom. Yet unchecked competition and *laissez-faire* individualism were doomed at the very dawn of the Industrial Revolution, and not merely in economics but in sociology. The only question that remains is what, if anything, can take their place and still leave the essence of freedom unimpaired—a question seldom asked and never answered. So likewise to redress the wrong which the Industrial Revolution has wrought upon the middle-class woman and her home, the only remedy we have devised is the ancient panacea of political equality—a vote without a programme.

The laborer has faced the Industrial Revolution with a forward looking programme—in fact two programmes. They are worth a moment's scrutiny as pointing the way to us others.

The first is the pragmatism of the old-line trade unionist of the nineteenth century—better wages, better working conditions. Thanks to our wealth of natural resources and to the energetic skill of the American workman, that programme has prospered abundantly—superabundantly. Even before the war the wages of labor, and especially of unionized labor, were out of proportion to those of the vast majority of brain workers. The cost of living, in which the major factor is wages, laid an ever increasing pressure upon the middle-class home. This inequity was redoubled by the war. Taking advantage of the national crisis, of the peril that confronted the freedom of the whole world, the unions exacted increase after increase of pay; and, as they did so, Mr. Gompers proclaimed that "labor would never surrender" the gains thus perilously achieved. It proved an empty boast. Eventually the sway of economic forces again asserted itself. Few things are as instructive, especially to the middle

class and its women, as the shifts and dodges of organized labor in its effort to escape its banquet of crow.

One of the means by which bureaus of labor ingratiate the power that has created them, including the bureau at Washington, is by drawing up schedules of the cost of a "decent" or "American" standard of living. When the deflation of wages set in, in 1921, such calculations figured largely in labor arbitrations. As "economic advisor" for certain New York pressmen and paper-handlers, Mr. George Soule "of the Labor Bureau, Inc.," produced an official statement showing that "the minimum amount necessary for a laborer to support his family in New York" was \$2,333.99. The wages of job pressmen were \$2,135, or \$199 less than this, and they were asked to accept a reduction. To the Labor Bureau, Inc., this was a scandal. Would the arbitrators consent to imposing an un-American standard of living? No reference was made to the cold facts with regard to American incomes as revealed in current returns of the income tax. Out of a population of 10,384,144 in the State, less than three quarters of a million individuals, or 742,704, made returns on incomes of \$1,000 or over. Those who received \$2,000 or over, including job pressmen and their like, numbered far less than half a million, 433,200. Now on the basis of five members to the family, which is that used in arriving at the "American" wage of \$2,333.99, there are more than two million families in the State (2,076,828). Thus the families living on less than \$2,000 a year, not to mention that exquisitely exact figure, \$2,333.99, outnumber those who share the fortune of job pressmen almost four to one. In the nation as a whole, those who reported incomes of over \$2,000 numbered 2,908,176—less than three per cent of the total population and less than one head of a family in seven. And the Labor Bureau, Inc., neglected the fact that in many workmen's families the older sons and daughters contribute to the income.

In discussing a similar problem, Mr. Charles M. Schwab said: "We talk of a minimum of living wage for the individual, but the community itself must be allowed to live." That is a fact to which organized labor is resolutely blind. How the working community outside of labor unions manages, is a long familiar tragedy. The average salary of university professors, assistant

professors and instructors is less than this wage claimed for job pressmen. The average salary of ministers was, in 1916, \$735 and is still much less than \$1,000. A vigorous campaign has long been waging in our churches to give the spiritual leaders of the nation "a parsonage and \$1,500 a year". Naturally arbitrators in labor disputes paid small heed to labor bureaus incorporated and their ninety-nine cents.

At the Denver meeting of the American Federation of Labor Mr. Gompers gave an engaging twist to the demand for an "American" wage. The Railway Labor Board was in session, dealing quite sensibly and by no means severely with wage schedules that in the case of conductors and engine drivers approximated the average salary of full professors in our universities and of the governors of our States. So Mr. Gompers affected to scorn the requirements of mere food, clothes and housing, as to which, by the figures supplied from his own Labor Bureaus, he hadn't a leg to stand on. Instead he demanded for the American worker the wherewithal for the larger life—cultural opportunities. As he subsequently expressed the same idea, the hog has his sty and his swill but the American laborer demands something better. The fact is, of course, that not only cultural opportunities but wealth and power have always been open to those who can and will work for them; that is the ultimate triumph of our free institutions. In spite of the fact that college graduates have, on the average, one-child families, in spite of the low level of American wages as revealed by the income tax returns, our universities are frequented as never before. The immediate followers of Mr. Gompers may have been flattered by his concern for their advancement in culture; but other effect there was none.

Obviously, the old-line unionist has reached an impasse. In the matter of wages he has, by all national standards, achieved justice and more than justice; and beyond wages neither he nor his leaders have any clear programme. The idea of a share in the dignity and responsibility of industrial management seems to them quixotic. All that remains is the familiar output of bluster and verbiage—against employers, against congress, against the courts. That, and not Mr. Gompers's sturdy years, is the cause

of his seeming decline in mentality. Having no longer a wrong to right, he can only make a noise that sounds good to the confused mass, on whose support his leadership depends.

In one way and one way only can organized labor deserve more pay than it has—by coöperating loyally and efficiently with other elements in our life to raise the productivity and the wealth of the nation as a whole. Unquestionably the Federation leaders realize this. In their calmer moments they have often stated the fact explicitly—but not during labor arbitrations or at labor conventions held in a period of deflation. The larger programme has no appeal to their followers, for to reach that ultimate goal present sacrifice is needful. In order to take labor must give, and in its traditional philosophy giving has no part.

The situation is vividly illustrated in another happy thought, frequently broached, that was urged once more at Denver in 1921. Mr. Gompers waved the bogey of an alliance between the 4,000,000 Federationists and the 14,000,000 of our farmers, which would enforce upon the nation the financial claims of both factions. Apparently it did not enter into his calculation that certain interests of labor and agriculture are unreconciled and, at least for the present, irreconcilable. What the laborer wants is cheap food, cheap clothing; but the farmer is out to get the maximum price for the raw materials of both. What the farmer wants is cheap transportation, cheap manufactured commodities of all sorts; but to achieve this the first requisite is a reduction of union wages. This opposition of interests was dramatized during the war—rendered obvious to the humblest intelligence. With wartime crops in the ground, the factory had drawn from the farm the cream of its laborers. Lured by union hours, union pay, and all the delights of silk shirts and the movies, the man with the hoe dropped it and made tracks for the city. The farmer, accustomed to labor from sun-up to sundown for gains that are at best problematical, has little use for the unionist. Genuine coöperation between farm and factory would of course result in a general lowering of prices, a general increase of production, and so inure to the benefit of both, of the nation as a whole. But this was farthest of all things from the intention at Denver. The farmer is learning that he has no business in that

galley. He has a programme in tune with his necessities—a national federation of his own, financed to market crops in the manner of other business men. The Washington agricultural conference of 1922, which met to consider measures of relief for the prostrate farmer, called for the deflation of wartime wages on the railways as essential to a reduction of rates. Mr. Gompers loudly protested—and was firmly though courteously given to understand that the Brotherhoods were profiteers against the nation.

And the lady, whose fate is so strangely allied to that of the laboring man? The American Federation of Labor makes no overtures to her, even when talking for Buncombe. Yet far more than the farmer she is its victim. What is to be the defense of the middle class home, its means of regaining the dignity, the natural function, of which the industrial revolution has robbed it? Few if any questions are as momentous as that.

The more obvious answer is an organization of brainworkers such as labor has achieved. In point of fact workers in many professions are already enrolled under the American Federation of Labor—newspaper reporters, teachers, clerks, musicians, actors. The musicians and actors, once helpless victims of managerial oppression, have profited as signally as ever a bricklayer or pressman. Yet there is one of those clouds on the horizon, no bigger than a hand. It is, in fact, the stage hand—who has joined in strikes for both actor and musician and for whom they are morally bound in turn to walk out, as musicians have already done. It is not only in this matter of the sympathetic strike that the professional class, when it joins the Federation, is bound to the wheel of organized labor. Between handworker and brainworker there is an essential, deep-seated opposition; and, however fully the brainworkers became organized under the Federation, they would always be outvoted by the millions of hand laborers. Especially in the case of far-seeing projects that promised a national benefit to be ultimately shared by all they would be hampered by the necessity of converting craftsmen who have little vision beyond present wages and working conditions. It is largely a sense of this that has prevented the organization and affiliation of salaried workers and professional men.

In England this difficulty has been avoided by forming a

separate group, the Middle Class Union. Though recently organized and having only some 300 local branches with an aggregate membership of a quarter of a million, it has already performed prime service. When a strike is threatened that would shut down any basic industry, tie up any public utility, the Middle Class Union calls for technically trained volunteers from its own membership to take the places of striking motormen, engineers, motor truck drivers, electricians, until the dispute can be settled equitably. In the transportation strike of 1919, and again when a general strike of the Triple Alliance was threatened in 1921, the Middle Class Union was a powerful factor in the uprising of the public which overawed the strikers and defeated the strike. In America the danger from national strikes, though distinct and increasing, is less and the movement to organize the middle class, though already on foot, is backward; but there can be no doubt that in both countries there is a future of great service for the Middle Class Union.

The gain will not be limited to the protection afforded against selfish or unreasonable demands of labor. A Middle Class Union should be the most powerful of correctives to our social and political thinking. When national industrial conferences are called, such as those at Washington in October and December, 1919, an effort has been made to represent what is called "the public"; but the spokesmen of "the public" lack weight and indeed a programme, being members without a constituency. There is in fact no such thing as a "public" that is distinct from labor and capital. To adjust the balance of national interests it is necessary that the brainworker should be represented as such. When we have an adequately national Middle Class Union its representatives will sit in at such conferences; they will speak with the voice of an organized, vigilant constituency and be backed by its industrial and political power.

There remains the second programme of organized labor, "industrial democracy." It is a plausible phrase glibly used by many who little comprehend it. If it means anything it means the blending and the consummation of the Industrial and the Democratic Revolutions in a socialist state. Whatever else may be said of this idea, it is not static but dynamic; for good or for

evil it could only result in the transformation of our national life, political, economic, social. It is not, like the trade union programme, the fabric of opportunist intelligence, invoking chimerical policies in order to gain immediate and class-limited ends. Nor is it, like the Middle Class Union, the product of a backward-looking, though educated and patriotic, conservatism. It was conceived by men of genius of a sort, middle-class in their origin and education,—what it contemplates is a renovation of society from its depths,—the logical culmination of the two historic revolutions of the nineteenth century.

If the new Socialist is a menace—the I. W. W., the Syndicalist, the Bolshevik, the National Guildsman—it is because he has taken seriously, and logically built upon, the doctrine of equality and democracy—which we others have so long professed, and disregarded. That is his only offense against reality. In the main body of his thought, he is a pioneer, a builder. While conservatives among us dwell amid phantoms of the past, he knows that the Industrial Revolution has violently shifted the national center of gravity. Our actual daily life and all the sources of our material power center in the great industrial units of the twentieth century. What Massachusetts and South Carolina, New York and Virginia, once were, that to-day are the coal mines, the steel trade, the steamships, the railways. The strongly federal Nation, which Washington and Hamilton conceived in terms of mainly agricultural States, cannot be achieved to-day without a federation of national industries into an intricately inter-dependent yet harmoniously functioning whole. Yet our publicists still unconsciously think in terms of the agricultural individualist and the ancient industrial household, while our legislators struggle legalistically at the task of adapting the static common law to the regulation of a new world, splendidly dynamic. The modern Socialist rejoices in the instinct for the jugular vein. Thanks to the war, he has been able not only to think but to act realistically, dyeing his hands deep in actuality.

Like the traditional conservatives, it is true, he accepts the dogmas of equality and democracy—and ignores, much as they do, the middle class and its claim to a special scope. This doubtless results from his need of justifying his claim that the pro-

letariat shall rule. In the name of native equality he can overturn the world. But the strength of his theory has proved the weakness of his practice. Where syndicalism was put into actual working, as in Russia and Italy, the fact that it rejected the middle class proved its undoing; where the attempt failed, as in England and the United States, it was the silent strength of the middle class that defeated it. In the way of actual progress, few things are less important than past-war experiments in the New Socialism—industrial democracy; but nothing in the world to-day is quite as significant as the joint spectacle of the thing it intended and the manner of its frustration.

The middle-class man has little use for democracy, social or industrial. What he holds dearest is his home, and the very special standard of his living. With regard to the woman well born and well bred, whom the middle-class man holds so dear, the industrial democrat is stone blind, abject in dehumanized theory, in economic materialism. In his eager if inadequate striving toward an ideal of democracy, he ignores the one thing that gives life its ultimate importance and dignity. In all the literature of the new Socialism there is no rustle of feminine drapery, no accent of the child—no thought of the middle-class family, with its traditions of character and culture, of the national need of always passing them on.

With every generation, it has been said, the life of the nation passes through the bodies of its women, is formed anew in the warmth and light of the home. But what if, in this curious, unconscious conflict between laborer and lady, the laborer should permanently triumph? Those who know the middle class best, its dwindling in numbers and in resources, know that the laborer will triumph, inevitably, unless we realize, and very soon, whither we are tending. First and foremost among the needs of the nation is that women well born and well bred shall lead wholesome, seemly lives—that those who are of sound body and able mind shall transmit to the future the most precious of a people's treasures.

JOHN CORBIN.